

the misty future, and they fix an assessment admittedly at the time above half-assets, on the assumption that after a certain period the rental of the village will from some undefined cause, increase to double the land-tax (the official theory being that the Government share is half the rental). They speculate that jungle land will be bought under cultivation; that a canal will soon offer more abundant navigation; that a railway or metalled road will give an easier and cheaper access to neighbouring markets; that prices will rise; that tenants will increase and multiply; that the rents are abnormally and absurdly low; that the land should pay much more; that the rents could easily be enhanced if the landowners would only properly exert themselves; and in this pleasant belief they at once raise the government demand to a rate admittedly far above the existing rental, and this largely increased tax the landowners are at once politely admonished to pay." But the people so dealt with are excessively poor and the struggle in many instances is "not for comforts or competency, but for life." Whatever, then, may be Lord Ripon's intentions as to the "spread of Romanism in India," it is clear that Christianity as at present represented there to the natives by government officials, must seem to them but a miserable creed, and we may even conclude without extravagance that were the "Jesuitical emissaries of the Church of Rome" to obtain the control of the State, things could hardly be much worse than they now are—if the Jesuits, on the other hand, were not very different from those the French Calvinist *savant*, M. Sace has spoken of in connection with South America, they would be able to establish things on a very much better footing. But, for the Protestant Alliance, as we have already said, the creed of Hindu or Mahomedan is preferable to that of Rome, and any despotism is preferred before a rule admitting of Jesuit authority. And let us ever keep in mind the old French saying "*Dis-moi qui tu hantes et je te dirai qui tu es*"—Let Vishnu be honoured in company with the "glorious, pious, and immortal memory"; they will most fitly run together.

WHATEVER may be the attitude of Baptists in New Zealand towards the godless schools, that of their BAPTISTS. brethren in America seems to grow adverse to them.

And let us remark, again, that Baptists in New Zealand

must not take their want of spirit very much to heart; their brethren in America seem to make up for all they need. There, for instance, is that prize-fight described by the San Francisco correspondent of our contemporary, the *Otago Daily Times*, and which came off, by invitation of the Rev. Mr. Kallech, sen., in the Metropolitan Temple, while the organist performed jigs and nigger melodies on his instrument. What other sect, we ask, can boast of a display of spirit like that? Let it bear due testimony. Our American Baptist friends, however, begin to suspect that the godless schools are hardly producing the crop of righteousness that many good people have expected from them, and their organ, the *Baptist Weekly*, boldly questions the capabilities of the schools. "There still lingers," says he, "with many people an idea that education is a preventive of crime; but common schools are by no means certain to produce good citizens." Why, this is as bad as Mr. Herbert Spencer himself, and one might think that Baptist and Agnostic took one and the same view of matters. It is remarkable, at any rate, that they do so in New Zealand, where both of them are convinced that good citizens will be run out of these schools as fast and sure as flour from the mill. But if these schools do not produce good citizens, what are they maintained for? It has always been the contention of their advocates that such a production was their chief use, and failing that, their *raison d'être* perishes. Our Baptist, nevertheless, although he disapproves of the godless schools, is still more bound to disapprove of the desire of Catholics to be permitted to do that which the Government has failed, and must fail, to do—that is, to give their children such an education as will ensure their being good citizens, because they will be good Christians, in which all the rest that is of any value is included. "We judge the Roman Catholics in the wrong," he says, "in their opposition to the system, but that far more ought to be attempted to promote the moral training of the young must be conceded." But what the "far more" must be it would probably puzzle this writer to explain,—unless, of course, he should explain, as many among ourselves would be anxious to do, if they judged it prudent, that religious Protestantism must be taught compulsorily to every child, irrespective of his parents' wishes. The religious advocates of secularism, in a word, are caught in their own snare, and having been induced, chiefly by their anti-Catholic bigotry, to follow the lead of the secularists, they are now in the quagmire from which they seem unable to withdraw, while what lies before them has at last caught their eyes and stricken them with terror. But let us listen to what our Baptist has to warn us of, in connection with the system he condemns, though he does not know how to propose a specific remedy for it, and can only propose that the remedy claimed by Catholics shall not be granted to them. "In this country," says he, "deeds of blood are generally the work of ignorant and besotted men, but the forgeries, great robberies and defalcations of the times, it is well

known, only men of good education could commit. These have been appalling in their number and in the terrible evils they have worked. There is no safeguard from crime in the ability to read and write, or even in the culture which a college can give, if there is not an education of the conscience in righteousness." But how shall the conscience be educated in righteousness while all the surroundings are godless? Here, then, we have a striking instance of what is really going on all around us—of a sectary alarmed by godlessness, beholding its uselessness—its worse than uselessness, its preparation for wickedness and crime, and yet who is bound to the wheels of the chariot on which the idol is drawn, in common with a multitude, by the bond of anti-Catholic bigotry. Godless education is not popular, but is feared, and would fall to pieces to-morrow were not bigotry enlisted in its support. But godlessness is consistently bound together by hatred, and its fruits will be consistent with the whole combination.

ANOTHER PROOF. ANOTHER proof, if one were wanted, as to the attitude of the Catholic laity towards secularism has been furnished by the Catholic cantons of Switzerland, where an indignant protest has been made in a very effectual manner.

At a plebiscite held on Nov. 26th, then, for the purpose of taking the vote of the people for the establishment of a ministry with the design of making the schools secular, the defeat of the movement was remarkable, and the most so in the Catholic Cantons where the majorities against it were overwhelming. The figures are as follows, as we find them in the London *Universe*:—"In the canton of Uri, there were 3865 Noes, and only 187 Ayes; in Schwytz, 9825 Noes against 610 Ayes; and in Nidwalden, 2477 Noes against 139 Ayes. In the canton of Friburg 4146 Ayes were polled, but they were entirely crushed by 20,513 Catholic votes of 'No.' In Obwalden, the most rural of all Swiss cantons, 3308 Noes stood against but 72 Ayes." In the face of the evidence, therefore, that exists to the contrary it is foolish for people to argue, as we occasionally find them doing, that the Catholic laity, if uninfluenced by their clergy, would accept the godless schools. Their conduct all over the world contradicts such a statement most emphatically, and gives it the lie as flatly as it can be given.

AMONG the reports that obtain circulation and relate to coming disturbances, there is one to the effect that it is the intention of Mr. Stanley, the

COMING WAR. African explorer, to engage 500 Swazis at Zanzibar and take them to combat on the Congo against the French monopoly of that river. And the river is an important one, capable, as it is, of placing in the hands of the power that commands it the trade of an immense region, extending from the Soudan to the sources of the Nile, and carrying a population estimated at some eighty millions. The possession of the river would give to France the trade of the Soudan, and spare any further planning on the part of French engineers or merchants as to the almost impossible construction of a railroad to connect Algeria with the district alluded to. The report, nevertheless, which states that Mr. Stanley is determined to prevent the French from intruding on the territory he has purchased can be hardly correct, for he must know it is extremely unlikely that they would think of doing so since the country in question has been most injudiciously selected, and was chosen with the object of uniting the navigable portion of the Congo with the sea by means of a road to be formed over a mountainous district, through which the river flows in a series of rapids that can never be made navigable. Undoubtedly it must have been very provoking, and more especially so to a man of Mr. Stanley's fiery temperament to find that, while he had been engaged in climbing the precipitous route in question, and had been unsparing in the expenditure of money on buying tracts of country and founding stations, M. de Brazza, without expense and with but few companions, had actually planted the French flag, by special agreement with Makoko the sovereign of the country, upon a point of the very lake called in English Stanley-Pool, in compliment to the explorer, and into which the Congo expands before it flows down among the rapids. M. de Brazza had obtained there the point commanding the true communication with the sea by means of an affluent that falls into the Atlantic under the name of the Quillou, and which point, in fact, must prove the key of the river Congo. With it in the possession of France, as it certainly is and almost as certainly will continue, Mr. Stanley's threats and ravings are all in vain. But had there never been a question of collision with France upon the Congo, Mr. Stanley might still have hesitated to return to the navigable portion of the river without a strong force to protect him, for a *vendetta* awaits him there on the part of a tribe who form the boatmen of the river, on which they with their families continually live, and who remember against him a slaughter of their people made at a certain islet when he arrived among them in 1877, and, grown weary of treating with the natives, had resolved to make his way by force. The Oubandjis remember this event bitterly, and have made up their minds to take, on the first opportunity, the ven-